

THE BLIND AMERICAN

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THE BLIND AMERICAN

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N. F. B. LOOKS TO '64 CONVENTION

(Editor's note: The following is an advance convention bulletin released to members and friends of the National Federation of the Blind by President Russell Kletzing.)

Come one, come all! The 1964 Convention of the National Federation of the Blind at Phoenix, Arizona, promises to be one of the best in the history of the organization. Read the following facts and you will see why we think so.

Hotel. The Convention will be headquartered at Phoenix's finest hotel--the Westward Ho. The opening session starts at 10 o'clock on Tuesday morning, June 30, and the final adjournment is at 5 o'clock on Friday afternoon, July 3. The Westward Ho is a luxury hotel in every sense of the word--large swimming pool open to all delegates without charge, food and bar service available right at the pool (simply use the poolside phone and call in your order); big enclosed patio, available at all times, palm trees and other tropical plants; western architecture, colonnades and balconies; sun decks on the roof, just off the eleventh floor, and air conditioning on the inside from top to bottom.

In the lobby of the hotel, a fabulous specialty shop called the Buttery is located. Purchase delicacies for yourself or friends--cactus marmalade, pomegranate jelly, wild orange preserves, date conserve, prickly pear jelly, almost every kind of imported and domestic liqueur, a truly magnificent collection of imported teas and coffees, a large variety of imported chocolates and pastries. . . .

Also, shop for jewelry or other items right in the lobby of the hotel. Come early or stay after the convention and see some of the Arizona sights. A tour service is located in the lobby to help you plan. At very low prices you can have a one-day or a two-day tour to the Grand Canyon, the Petrified Forest, the Painted Desert, Old Mexico, or ghost cities and gold mines. If you like Arizona so well that you decide to buy a piece of real estate and settle down, that can be arranged also--right in the hotel lobby there's a real estate sales office.

With all of this, listen to the hotel rates and the banquet prices--the best in years. Single rooms \$6.50; doubles, \$8.00; twin beds, \$10.00; rollaways (for third person in room), \$3.00. Get your reservations in now, because after the Westward Ho is filled the overflow will be put at Hotel San Carlos, located one long

and one short block from Westward Ho--only two streets to cross, at the same rates as Westward Ho.

Banquet. The banquet will be held on Thursday evening, July 2. The price (including tip and tax) will be only \$3.75. The menu will feature swiss steak with all the trimmings.

Tour. The scheduled convention tour is, perhaps, the most unique and interesting ever. It will be held on the afternoon and evening of Wednesday, July 1. We are going to Legend City, similar to Disneyland--and in some ways more so. The cost of the tickets will be quite reasonable, and once we are inside the gate there will be no additional charge regardless of the number of rides or activities engaged in. For example: examine and ride in a 1913 Pierce-Arrow car, which carries four and can be steered by a blind person (Legend City has several). Ride on a burro: there are several "strings" of these unique animals, and the rides are fabulous. Ride on the old-fashioned, steam-driven choo-choo train, which makes regular runs around the entire perimeter of the 30-acre park. Take the sky ride; get the bucket-like container and be lifted 60 feet above the ground for a ride across the entire park. Pan for gold with old-fashioned mining equipment. Go down in the coal cars and ride through the old ghost mine. Purchase souvenirs at the old-fashioned western store, where a nine-foot bull-whip costs \$1.50.

Of course, there are also the regular rides of the modern amusement park. There is a chicken dinner for one dollar, and a Mexican dinner with one entree for \$1.25 and three entrees for \$1.50. We will arrive at the park gate at four o'clock in the afternoon. There will be transportation back to the hotel within a couple of hours and periodically through the evening; or you can stay until the gates close at midnight. The cost is the same. There is nothing like Legend City in the whole nation.

These are only a few indications of the superb convention plans Jim Fall and the other Arizona people are making, so don't hesitate--combine the NFB Convention with a fun-filled vacation in unique Arizona. Send your reservations now, so that you will be sure of getting a room in the headquarters hotel. Send your requests for reservations directly to: Reservations Manager, Hotel Westward Ho, 618 North Central Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona. Tell your friends, and let's have a record crowd.

By the way, plans are moving forward for the 1965 convention in Washington, D. C. We are going to the Mayflower Hotel--and the rates are good.

Special Note: We are exploring the possibility of a chartered air flight from the East to the '64 Phoenix Convention--routed from two or three of the main population centers, such as Boston, New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Cleveland and Pittsburgh. Preliminary negotiations indicate that the fare would be about \$138.00 round trip, per person, if enough people make use of the flight. If you may be coming to the Phoenix convention and believe that you may be interested in the low-priced chartered flight, please write by January 15 (1964) to Manuel Rubin, 24 Pearl Street, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

We are asking now only for an expression of interest, not for commitments, so that we can determine the route in scheduling the flight. All those who reply will be furnished detailed information on the chartered flight as soon as it becomes available.

THE WAR AGAINST BLINDNESS -- RESEARCH FRONT

Acceleration of eye research across the country despite three major roadblocks--lack of facilities, scientific manpower and funds--is summarized by Research to Prevent Blindness, Inc., in its annual report issued recently from New York.

The foundation, established in 1960 to encourage and support scientific research and research training aimed at finding means of preventing blindness, reports these major eye research accomplishments during the past year:

The first successful use of a drug (IDU) to combat a wide-spread virus infection--herpes simplex keratitis, that leads to eight out of ten corneal transplants done in this country;

Use of the needle-thin beam of the laser, the most intense light ever produced, to repair torn retinas (see below, article titled "New Success with Detached Retinas"); and

The first successful micro-photography of the bloodstreams within the retina.

In addition, progress was also reported by the research foundation on these experimental fronts:

Development of a vaccine to prevent trachoma, the world's leading cause of blindness; new techniques in cataract surgery and work on the biochemistry of the lens, to find the cause of cataracts; increased understanding of uveitis, a blinding inflammatory disease; study of diabetic retinopathy, a blinding condition of the retina stemming from diabetes; and the finding of ways to prevent such genetically related eye diseases as retinitis pigmentosa, dislocated lenses and blind- ing tumors in childhood.

The RPB group also pointed in its report to new techniques of freezing and storing whole eyes for transplantation; the isotope-tagging of cells to learn how wounds of the cornea are healed and how the eye repels virus invasions; and investigation of metabolism and the aging process, indicating that rings around the cornea, normally thought to result from aging, may be related to fat intake.

Stressing the need for research to save sight, the foundation cites a growing incidence of blindness in this country--more than 30,000 new cases a year compared to 6,700 cases a year in the 1940's-- a trend that will reportedly continue as the life span lengthens, unless research can unmask the causes of blindness and find new means of prevention.

The report points out, finally, that medical science still does not understand the cause of six out of ten cases of blindness, including cataracts, a condition recognized in ancient Babylon and described in Hammurabi's Code nearly 4,000 years ago.

CALIFORNIA REHAB APPOINTEES SCORED

By James McGinnis

(Editor's note: Mr. McGinnis is president of the California Council of the Blind, the state affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind. His article, reprinted with permission, was prepared for publication in THE COUNCIL BULLETIN.)

For years California has had one of the poorest rehabilitation records for the blind of any state. Only last August, statistics from

the federal Department of Health, Education and Welfare showed that California was 54th among the states and territories in successful rehabilitation efforts. Only 54 were listed.

Despite our best efforts, S. B. 1023 was passed last Spring, jamming services for the blind into the new Department of Rehabilitation along with all other rehabilitative services. Due to our efforts, however, a special Division for the Blind was established, which now includes Rehabilitation for the Blind.

Andrew Marrin developed one of the most massive campaigns ever seen in the Governor's office to have himself appointed Director of the new department. Despite this, he was not successful in obtaining the directorship. His failure was generally credited to hundreds of letters from individual blind people throughout the state opposing his appointment.

The directorship went instead to Warren Thompson who had held a similar position in Colorado and has had experience with the federal Vocational Rehabilitation Service. We had high hopes for Mr. Thompson, but he has made the job of developing an effective rehabilitation service for the blind virtually impossible by the appointments he has made. These are Andrew Marrin as Deputy Director and David Mendelsohn as Chief of the Division for the Blind.

Marrin's appointment to the Deputy Directorship is nothing short of incredible in view of the appalling record he had in the preceding years as Chief of Rehabilitation Services. Warren Thompson, speaking at the Council Convention, pointed out that California was 47th in utilization of federal funds, although it is the largest state in the union. Marrin's attacks on organizations of the blind, his destruction of an independent vending stand organization and the substituting for it of company unions, and most of all his disgraceful record in the placement of blind persons in gainful employment are all so well known to the blind of California that nothing more need be cited to show his disqualification for the job of deputy director. If Marrin's appointment is termed incredible, Mendelsohn's appointment as Chief of the Division for the Blind is doubly unbelievable. His most recent experience, as a rehabilitation counselor in southern California, is characterized by ineptness, antagonism of clients, and lack of any outstanding job placement. Within the last few days, we have had documentary evidence of charges so serious against him that we are considering filing a formal request for disciplinary action with the State Personnel Board.

At the suggestion and request of Winslow Christian, Administrator of the Health and Welfare Agency in which the Department of

Rehabilitation is now located, we submitted recommendations for both the Deputy Director and Chief of the Division for the Blind positions. The people we recommended had proven without question their ability to work with blind people and put them into useful jobs. After our recommendations were ignored, we issued a press release setting forth the facts concerning the deplorable appointments of Marrin and Mendelsohn and urging Thompson to reconsider. (Marrin is removable by Thompson at will, and Mendelsohn has not yet obtained civil service status in the new job.)

The future of rehabilitation is gloomy unless--unless the blind of California do something about it. Times are changing and we need no longer go hat in hand begging for better services. It is time that we demand adequate rehabilitation service as a right and enforce this demand by moral strength and public awareness.

CIVIL SERVICE SWITCHES TO THE BLIND

An event of real importance for the future employment of many blind people took place in Washington on March 13, 1963, when the first totally blind switchboard operator to be employed under the Federal Civil Service went to work for the General Services Administration. Having completed the required one-year experience and passed the civil service aptitude test, this young lady was certified to the General Services Administration for a Grade 3 position from the regular civil service register.

On April 1, 1963, another blind switchboard operator was also employed by the General Services Administration. This operator, who did not have the requisite one-year experience but who had passed the aptitude test, was certified by Civil Service Commission as a switchboard trainee, Grade 1. After completing the required experience, she will become eligible for promotion.

These two cases are illustrative of the two avenues open to the employment of blind switchboard operators under the Federal Civil Service, according to information from the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration.

1. Blind operators with at least one-year experience may,

upon passing the aptitude test, be placed on the civil service register for appointment to Grade 3 positions at beginning annual salary of \$3,820; and

2. Operators with sufficient skill but lacking the one-year experience may, upon completion of the civil service aptitude test, be certified for a specific position as Grade 1 trainee, with a beginning annual salary of \$3,245.

BLIND MAN BLUFFS MACHINES

Clifford E. Jensen, recently re-elected president of the Colorado Federation of the Blind, was the recipient of another accolade a short time ago--in the form of an article featuring his personal accomplishments which was published in the ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS.

The article, written by staff reporter Wes French, described Jensen as "a 40-year-old machinist who wants his story told for one reason alone--to let people know that blind or otherwise handicapped people can do a full-time job at tasks which for many would be difficult even without a physical handicap."

The newspaper story said that doctors at the University of Colorado Medical Center, "in need of intricate devices and instruments in their teaching and research, turn to one man to produce them. And the man who turns out these items, anywhere from a knurled screw to a huge Rube Goldberg-looking machine, is blind."

Jensen was said to have devised and manufactured dozens of medical and scientific instruments "which previously existed only in the mind of the researcher or teacher who needed a specific tool for a specific need."

An employee of the medical school for the past ten years, Jensen lost his sight through illness in 1955. "I got the usual advice--go home, take it easy for awhile and we'll see what happens," he said.

"But after a month at home I couldn't take it anymore.

I have a machine shop in the basement and one day I went down there to find out if I could still work. By taking my time and adapting some of my tools, I was able to turn out as good work as ever," he said.

"I called the medical school and asked if they would give me a chance to go back to work. I was lucky. They were very understanding people and told me to come on in and get to work."

Today in his crowded machine shop at the medical center Jensen operates all manner of complicated machinery--drill presses, lathes, saws and other metal-working tools--all through a well-developed sense of touch, the newspaper reported.

Thanks to a letter from Cliff's wife, Marie, THE BLIND AMERICAN has learned of other "constructive" accomplishments turned out by the state Federation president in his spare time. Among other things, he has built a patio behind the Jensen house, removing a section of the wall and window and installing a double sliding door which he constructed himself (with the aid of Cliff, Junior).

"He has also worked with young Cliff to finish paneling the walls of our mountain cabin which he began long before he lost his sight, and to put the log siding on the outside of the cabin," Mrs. Jensen relates.

"He designed and cut the 'gingerbread' trim that gives our cabin a Swiss chalet appearance, by making a wood and metal jig for his portable power-saw to follow. Now he is preparing to go to Camp Tahosa with the Boy Scout troop for a week of summer camping."

Between his part-time volunteer labor on home and cabin, his full-time job as head machinist at the university medical center--and his active responsibilities as the head of Colorado's statewide organization of the blind--Cliff Jensen nevertheless finds time to help Marie with the raising of their four children.

Otherwise, he just loafs.

NEVADA'S MODEL CAMP FOR BLIND CHILDREN

By John C. Ruiz

(Editor's note: Mr. Ruiz is Chief of the Bureau of Services to the Blind, Division of Welfare, Nevada State Department of Health and Welfare. His article, originally prepared as a staff memorandum, is reproduced here in abridged form.)

The State of Nevada, as most readers already know, has been in the past and continues to be woefully inadequate in resources for serving persons who are blind. While evaluation centers outside the state have served a definite purpose in obtaining information needed for fruitful rehabilitation plans for our blind clients, it has long been apparent that our state itself had a need for some type of evaluation facility in which our rehabilitation facility could obtain first-hand data of more use in planning.

In 1959 we began to plan a small evaluation facility of our own in the form of an annual orientation training course of two weeks' duration--attended by 20 to 25 clients, along with counselors and additional professional and supporting staff, in a 24-hour-day residential setting.

Up until 1963 the Bureau held four such courses with great success. This year the Chief of the Bureau proposed that blind children be accepted within the 1963 orientation training course. Needless to say, the Bureau's professional staff viewed this suggestion with some alarm, since until this date the Bureau of Services to Children had been restricted to the provision of talking books and some consultation for families and resource teachers.

The proposal was for a camp setting rather than a school setting, in view of the fact that this year's course was to serve as a supplement to the children's school-year learning. While in previous years the Bureau had provided for its adult clients an academic subject or instruction, this time the instruction would be in the area of what we call "tools for living," for lack of a better name. The curriculum would consist of such items as social dancing, table etiquette, face-to-face speaking, mobility, typing, swimming, hiking and fishing, and group discussion. The latter heading would take in such subjects as social relationships between boys and girls, how to make friends, parent and child problems, occupational information, and a rudimentary introduction to personal problem-solving.

Eight short months after the original planning session, the Bureau launched its 1963 orientation training course, in the vicinity of beautiful Lake Tahoe, at a rather primitive but adequate camp site. Of the 22 children accepted for the course, eleven were boys and eleven girls; moreover, boys and girls were of sufficiently compatible age to allow us to plan our program for a coeducational younger group and an older group.

Since the children were in much greater need of personal supervision than our adults in the past, four cottage supervisors were employed and the children divided for residential purposes into four small groups--younger and older boys, younger and older girls.

For some time the Bureau has felt that services for blind children and adults alike have been provided too much in indoor settings, thereby failing to provide sufficient outdoor experiences for healthy, well-rounded living. For this reason as much activity as possible was conducted out of doors. This included classes, recreation and even dining.

On an experimental basis we conducted group discussions classes which were as much as possible unstructured so as to allow the children sufficient feeling of freedom and spontaneous expression to enable them to bring to the classes their problems, which usually were viewed as common problems by enough of their classmates to warrant discussion.

The four cottage supervisors had a definite function to perform--providing the children with such items of training as grooming, personal hygiene, table etiquette, household arts, indoor mobility and attitude training in the areas of punctuality, acceptable deportment and camp citizenship.

Activities of Daily Living classes were conducted by a coordinator who worked with three additional instructors. This section attempted to impart to the children in a sequential program such activities as handicrafts, household arts, home mechanics and structured outdoor recreation. Each child received a separate evaluation by this section, and an individual plan was set up for each enabling him to begin at his own level and to progress to more complex activities during the course.

Our evenings and weekends were filled with recreation such as hiking, swimming, boatriiding, fishing, campfire sessions, community sings and picnics.

Conclusions:

While at the beginning of this course, we all felt anxiety as to its success, we now realize that a great deal of benefit was derived by the children from their experience. Furthermore, the children's families also benefited as we know from countless very positive communications which we have had since the children returned to their homes.

While our 1963 orientation training course for children was wholly experimental, we know now that this type of evaluation endeavor does work and we plan to incorporate it into the Bureau's ongoing programs--alternating the yearly sessions between children and adults.

At the time of this writing, all of the children served this summer are again back at school. Our resource teachers have also commented upon the benefits which they feel these children received, and have urged that more of this type of service be given as soon as possible; for even though the primary aim of the course was for provision of evaluation information to the counselors, the byproducts received were invaluable in terms of aiding our children toward more self-sufficiency in their activities of daily living, both for the present and the future.

IOWA OBSERVES WHITE CANE WEEK

An official proclamation naming the week of October 13, 1963, as "White Cane Safety Week" was issued last month by Iowa's Governor Harold E. Hughes. The gubernatorial action came on the heels of efforts by the Iowa Association of the Blind and the National Federation of the Blind to draw attention throughout the country to white cane laws. Governor Hughes's proclamation follows:

"WHEREAS, the problems of blindness can be solved by proper training and opportunity for the blind, by public education and understanding, and by effective research; and

"WHEREAS, Iowa Lions Clubs, particularly through the Iowa Lions Sight Conservation Foundation; the Iowa Association of the

Blind, the state affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind; and others have worked cooperatively to spearhead programs in Iowa leading to the economic and social independence of the blind; and

"WHEREAS, the white cane and laws relating to it symbolize the independence that can be achieved by the blind;

"NOW, THEREFORE, I, Harold E. Hughes, Governor of the State of Iowa, do hereby proclaim the week of October 13, 1963, as WHITE CANE SAFETY WEEK in Iowa, and call upon all our citizens to focus attention upon the needs and problems of the blind, to encourage employers and the public to utilize the available skills of competent blind persons, to support Iowa organizations guiding this important work, and to recognize the white cane as an instrument of safety and self-help for blind pedestrians on our streets and highways."

ARIZONANS HOLD RADIO PANEL DISCUSSION

By Margaret Pekarek

"The Role of the Blind in Business and Industry" was the subject of a stimulating panel discussion staged by the Arizona Federation of the Blind shortly before its recent state convention (held October 19-20 at Phoenix's PorterHouse Motel). The discussion, which brought together representatives of industry and business along with leaders of the organized blind, was arranged primarily as a radio broadcast designed to interest employers in expanding job opportunities for blind persons.

Among those participating was Kenneth Jernigan, first vice president of the National Federation of the Blind and director of Iowa's Commission for the Blind, who emphasized that a well-trained blind individual can competently hold virtually every job in industry and needs only the opportunity to demonstrate his equal capacity on the job.

The expert work done by blind persons in processing film was explained by John Fahey, executive manager of the Arizona Color Film Company, who noted that blind technicians are more capable than sighted in this work due to their trained sensitivities of touch and taste.

Ridge Hicks, assistant to the president of Allison Steel and head of the advisory council of Arizona's Industries for the Blind, told of the profit made on last year's civil defense project which involved packing and assembling of sanitation kits. This year Arizona and the Phoenix Workshop has been awarded another contract to assemble some 64,000 kits, with the provision of employment to many blind Arizonans.

The activities of the Arizona Federation and of Phoenix's Zenith Club were detailed to the radio audience by Gordon Perrine, legislative chairman of the AFB and president of Clisco Lab Supply Company. Perrine also urged the sighted public to take an interest in the organizations of the blind and asked their support in securing new opportunities for the sightless "who do not want your pity but only jobs which will bring self-support and independence."

The radio discussion was moderated by Dr. Ralph Hook, Arizona State University professor, and was broadcast on "Western Business Roundup" radio program. The panel group also conducted another discussion on related subjects of interest to the blind as part of the AFB state convention.

HANDICAPPED FIRM SETS SAFETY RECORD

Don't tell Robert Piccola that handicapped workers are not safe workers. If you do, he will point out to you that his firm, which hires the handicapped--the Piccola Manufacturing Achievement Project for Handicapped, Inc. (509 East Market, Louisville, Ky.)--has had 8 years without an accident.

Ironically, Piccola started the firm 8 years ago after he was paralyzed by a methane gas explosion. After recovering his health he organized the company and so far has trained over 200 handicapped persons and others to perform useful work.

The company, which makes material-handling equipment, recently won an award from the Safety Department of the Kentucky Department of Labor for its record of no lost time from work injuries.

At the time of the inspection a few months ago Mr. Piccola

had 26 workers. Twenty more had also been trained and placed in employment elsewhere. Piccola gets no Federal or State assistance except help in locating handicapped workers through the Kentucky State Employment Service, the Jefferson County rehabilitation program, the State Commission for Employment of the Handicapped, and other agency sources giving such assistance.

This is a personal project with Piccola which he calls his "investment in humanity."

After his workers have served a one-year training period they may stay with the company, earning periodic pay raises. If they prefer, he helps them find other jobs on the outside.

Piccola says he attributes the success of his firm to two factors: One is the loyalty and teamwork of his handicapped workers and two is his wife, Marie.

A LETTER TO COLLEGE YOUTH

By Bill Lyons

(Editor's note: Mr. Lyons, vice president of the Rhode Island Federation of the Blind, is the author of the following communication published in the Brown University student newspaper, the BROWN DAILY HERALD, November 19, 1963. The letter has been abridged to meet limitations of space.)

Editor:

Truly, those of the animal world, humans included, who are without eyesight are the "sightless." The term "blind" has a variety of meanings, as a peep into Webster's Unabridged will show anyone who could define the term "to see." But, since the race of man has elected to speak of those of us who rumble around in the thing called human life--we are "the blind." So, let us use the name made familiar by that most uncontrollable of all weapons--the tongue, ably aided by the loose pen.

Your sociology department knows next to nothing about the

sociology of the blind. The famous (or infamous) libraries know even less. No one has ever written and published a real "sociology of the blind," and at this late date, when some nut might let fly with an incinerator missile or bomb, it would appear that our men of pen have a more pressing literary endeavor calling them. So, how are you college kids going to learn something practical about the sociology of the blind? Of course, you will want to know something about it. What will you do if the proposition in concrete form should pop up in front of you like a brick wall? . . .

A well-educated human or other animal should know something consequential about his fellow humans and other animals who can't see the edge of the precipice toward which they are walking or sliding or diving. What makes the blind humans tick? How in Halifax do they know which room reads "MEN"? . . . How do they manage to pass the unpublished entrance exams for Brown or Pembroke or even Harvard? And, if they go through college on a pony or otherwise, what jobs await them, and where? Do they have fun on the beach? And how do they get there without an escort? (Would you want an escort if taking someone special, or being taken by someone special to a sandy, dreamy nook by a clutching arm of the sea?) And who reads your most precious private mail to you? Gosh, kids, for guys and gals with alma mammy heaped all over you, you sure are well supplied with ignorance about the millions of blind guys and gals on terra firma who, but for the grace of God or a turn of hard luck or what have you, would ipso facto change shoes with you!

Drop around and see how the other less-than-half faces the music. We, of the Rhode Island Federation of the Blind, could use your eyesight and your youthful ambition. . . . You can help us organize a better life for the blind of Rhode Island. We shall tell you how. You can make your college days worthwhile. Bring any blind human who might be studying with you in the halls of ivy. Come. . . .

TRIBUTE TO LEONARD ROBINSON

Leonard A. Robinson--famed blind attorney known as the "father of the vending stand program," now supervisor of services to the visually handicapped of the District of Columbia Department of Vocational Rehabilitation--drew a strong tribute recently from the original author of the federal vending stand legislation, Senator Jennings Randolph of West Virginia.

In a speech before the United States Senate published in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD (October 24, 1963), Senator Randolph graphically described the background of experience and dedication which led Robinson a generation ago to conceive the idea of a national vending stand program for the blind.

A graduate of the school for the blind in Philadelphia and subsequently of Western Reserve University Law School in Cleveland, Ohio, Robinson was said to have learned as far back as 1931 "of a project pending in Congress which would permit blind persons to operate snack bars in Federal buildings. His two years of active law practice had brought him in touch with many sightless citizens who, despite their various abilities and skills, had found it difficult to secure employment due to the skeptical attitude of employers," Senator Randolph said.

"Mr. Robinson realized that the Federal stand program for the blind, if enacted into law, would be an object lesson for society. Such people attending their vending stands and serving customers would demonstrate to thousands all over the country that the blind were able, businesslike, and employable.

"Mr. Robinson brought his plan to me, and in 1936 legislation passed Congress and became law. . . . Mr. Robinson was not a paid worker, but a volunteer who labored at the expense of his law practice and reportedly utilized almost \$10,000 of his personal savings," the Senator stated.

He recalled that "when Mr. Robinson came to the District of Columbia in 1931 to make his first study of the possibilities of the Federal effort, there were 10 blind persons employed here. . . . Their combined annual income approximated \$9,000."

By contrast, Senator Randolph said that there are today approximately 77 vending stands in the District of Columbia making use of the skills of 80 blind persons. "Their annual gross business during this fiscal year is estimated to be close to three million dollars,

with net profits to the operators of more than \$600,000.

"It is estimated that there are at least 200 other blind persons employed in the District whose annual combined incomes approximate two million dollars. In the United States today, a total number of 2,425 operators are employed under the Randolph-Sheppard Act," he said.

"All this as a result of the Federal legislation which Leonard Robinson helped to carry forward."

NEW SUCCESS WITH DETACHED RETINAS

The world is no longer necessarily dark for many who suffer from what used to be a major cause of blindness, according to a report published recently in the Oakland (California) TRIBUNE. Detached retinas--the photographic film of the eyes--are being successfully repaired in about 85 percent of surgical operations.

A group of eye surgeons reported on this heartening development at the San Francisco convention of the American College of Surgeons held in late October.

Less than a generation ago those who developed this condition usually were blinded, many in both eyes, because doctors knew next to nothing of methods to repair the ailment, the newspaper said. The affliction reportedly strikes one out of every 4,000 persons--brought about when the retina, a filmy substance on the inside of the eyeball, becomes detached from the nerves leading to the brain.

"Warning symptoms consist of light flashes and swarms of black spots that swim before one's eyes," the article stated. The surgeons claim that such symptoms are experienced by everyone at some time, but if they persist can mean trouble.

"Surgeons have developed many ways to treat this affliction, including such methods as using silicon rubber coating to keep the retina in place. Dramatic developments, such as the photocoagulator and lasers, have limited utility at present," the doctors were quoted as saying.

These methods reportedly provide heat to seal the retina when a tear occurs, before the retina is entirely detached, but once the retina is detached other methods of operation are needed, the physicians said.

Participating in the discussion were Doctors John C. Long, Denver; Albert N. Lemoine, Jr., Kansas City, Missouri; Neil F. Thorlakson, Seattle, and Bayard H. Colyear, Jr., San Francisco.

IN STEP AND IN TUNE

"The halftime show began and the University of Florida Gator band went through its perfect maneuvers without difficulty. No one took special notice of Leah Russell, a slender blonde coed playing the piccolo.

"The band twirled and turned and filed into formation. No one noticed Leah because she didn't miss a step, and because no one knew her secret.

"Leah has been blind since birth."

So began a feature story on Miss Russell, a freshman at the University of Florida, which appeared in the GAINESVILLE SUN on October 15, 1963. The account of her unusual musical--and physical--accomplishment was said to have begun in the ninth grade at a Miami high school when she first learned to play the flute, similar to the piccolo she now plays.

During her first two years of high school, Leah played with the school band, but retired to the sidelines when the group marched onto the field. Then, in her junior year, she burst into the band-leader's office determined to join in as an "active" member of the band, the newspaper reported. "I get lonely just sitting there while everybody else plays," she told him.

The band director gave her individual coaching, and she practiced barefoot on the sidewalk in order to master the special step and cadence of the marching band--an eight-steps-to-five-yards ratio. "The cracks were exactly five yards apart and they taught me

to take the proper step length," she said.

When Leah entered the Florida college for the first time this fall, few problems were encountered. So far she has marched in the Georgia Tech, Mississippi State and Richmond games, according to the newspaper story.

The slender student plans to major in English and hopes to teach literature, but is also interested in journalism because she "loves to write."

BROTHERS . . . & OTHERS

Crosby Heads New Jerseyans. Myles Crosby of Englewood was elected president at the sixth annual convention of the State Council of New Jersey Organizations of the Blind, held in Paterson on October 19. Milford Force of Somerset was chosen to be first vice president. Other elected officers are: second vice president, Stanley Spaide, Audubon; recording secretary, Mrs. Constance Rich, of Elizabeth; treasurer, Henry Duser, Jersey City. Three members named to the Executive Committee are Mrs. Anne Rose Johnston, Newark; Mrs. Lois Forstner, Woodbridge, and Mr. Harold Diaker, Rutherford.

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Maryland Council Elections. Mrs. Clarice Arnold was re-elected to the presidency of the Maryland Council of the Blind in elections held last month. Marjorie Flack was named vice president and William Appel treasurer. Another event of note is reported to THE BLIND AMERICAN by our loyal Maryland correspondent, Marjorie Flack:

"For the first time since we were organized in 1927, we were given White Cane Safety Day proclamations by the state governor and the mayor of Baltimore. The date was October 15. The coverage was far-reaching and the response most gratifying. Needless to say, all of us are quite pleased; we hope to do even better in the future."

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Don Capps on Job Training. Donald C. Capps, second vice president of the National Federation of the Blind, delivered the key speech at the October convention of the Alabama Federation of the Blind, stressing as a main theme the economic problem of blindness. Following are a few of his pertinent observations:

"There is no single or simple answer to our economic dilemma. However, I feel that there definitely are some things we can do to bring about a healthier situation. We live in an era in which education and specialized training are an imperative part of our modern life. First, a sighted person must have certain training and skills before he can successfully secure a job, unless he is willing to accept a job requiring only manual labor. The same is true in the case of a blind person. However, unlike the sighted person the blind individual, in addition to possessing the same training and skill, must also be a cracker-jack salesman, as he will have to convince the prospective employer that his blindness will not affect his ability to perform the job satisfactorily. So, then, it is really a twofold proposition. First, if blind people are to meet successfully the competition for jobs, they must be highly trained in our schools, in our colleges, and in rehabilitation centers.

"The second step is to wage an all-out war on human prejudices and misunderstandings on the part of America's employers. . . . We realize that we already have training programs and programs of public education, and we are proud of the progress that has been made, but we feel that these programs have been more passive than active. . . . The blind should take the lead in seeing to it that they get the technical training and other forms of education so that they can compete in the open market for a job. We must insist upon the necessary appropriations to finance these programs adequately, for in the long run this will be more economical than the relief rolls."

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Blind Peace Corpsman Profiled. The second blind person to volunteer successfully for the Peace Corps, Mike McAviney of California, was the subject of a verbal profile in the October, 1963, issue of the NEWSLETTER published by the Alumni Association of the Oakland Orientation Center for the Adult Blind. Portions of the brief biographical sketch follow:

"Mike, a native of the Hawaiian Islands, came to California and entered the School for the Blind in Berkeley. After he graduated from Oakland Technical High School, he entered college in Salinas where he received his A.A. degree with a major interest in Foreign Relations.

"About a year ago, he became interested in the Peace Corps, applied, was accepted, and in July went to New Mexico to begin an intensive orientation and training course at the University of Albuquerque for his two-year assignment at the School for the Blind in Guayaquil, Ecuador.

"His training schedule consisted of 30 hours per week of Spanish, 16 hours of discussion and lectures, and 22 hours of Outward Bound (hiking, camping, swimming, etc.) One noteworthy part of the training was a four-day survival hike in the Pecos wilderness. His training was completed in October and he will go to Ecuador, in South America."

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Blind Actors' Group. The Elbee Audio Players, an independent group of blind amateur players, performing at various community centers in the New York City area, seeks additional players. Its aims are: the development of a permanent blind repertory company based on full-length audio, dramatic reading adaptations of major plays; the encouragement of richer self-expression, and, above all, service to the community. Blind persons living in the New York area, who are competent braille readers or can read large print, are invited to participate in this challenging program. No dramatic experience is necessary. Interested persons may contact Director David Sverdlow, 621 West End Avenue, New York (TRafalgar 4-5704).

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Nevada Officers Listed. Not mentioned in last month's report in these columns on the October convention of the Nevada Federation of the Blind was the full roster of officers elected to serve alongside President Audrey Bascom. They are: first vice president, K. O. Knudson, Las Vegas; second vice president, Catherine Callahan, Reno; secretary, Coe Hawthorne, Las Vegas; treasurer, Jim Ellis, Boulder City. Chosen as board members were Carl Clontz, Louise Long, Jean Savage, and Jimmie Lee Washington.

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Guide for Parents. Basic principles of caring for a blind child, presented in picture-book form, comprise a newly published informational brochure, A Guide for Parents of a School-Age Blind Child. Agencies and professional persons interested in the visually handicapped may obtain a free copy by writing The State Commission for the Blind Children's Services, 270 Broadway, New York 7, New York.

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Small Business Opportunities. A new publication of the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration, "Small Business Enterprises in Vocational Rehabilitation," is concerned with opportunities in the small business field for placement of handicapped persons. Pointing out that 10 percent of all placements in the state-federal rehabilitation program are in self-employment, this booklet contains guidelines to help rehabilitation counselors in planning small business objectives with their clients. It may be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., at 20 cents per copy.

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Journey Out of Darkness. This is the title of a new autobiography by Marie Bell McCoy, mainly concerned with her experience and adjustment following sudden loss of sight. "My province, and the province of this book, is to hearten the spirit, lift the morale, of persons seeking a 'way out' after some personal disaster--whether that disaster be physical or emotional," she writes. As summarized in the BOOK-OF-THE-MONTH CLUB NEWS: "Mrs. McCoy's account of her fight to free herself from the emotional blackness which descended upon her is a sincere and moving story. Her record of the insults she endured--people shouted at her, assumed that she could no longer sign her name but was reduced to making a mark, and told her that the only occupation open to her was to weave potholders and sell them door-to-door--demonstrates how great the need still is for public education in dealing with the handicapped. But more than this, her book is a specific, detailed account of how she marshaled her inner resources in the face of tragedy. It is a guide for those who must, or may have to, do likewise."

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Typewriters Reasonably Priced. Blind persons who may be considering the purchase of a new typewriter are urged to write to the MATILDA ZIEGLER MAGAZINE FOR THE BLIND, at Monsey, New York, for details on Remington Portables offered through this publishing company by the Remington Typewriter Company. The machines are said to be brand-new late models available at a reasonable price, according to the magazine. . . . Aluminum collapsible canes, of any length, are obtainable from the Service Committee for the Blind, 935 North Sycamore, Lansing, Michigan, according to an item in THE OBSERVER, monthly newsletter of the Montana Association for the Blind. The canes reportedly are white with a red tip; they are made by blind people and profits from their sale assigned to a home for the aged blind.

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Boston Blind Forge Ahead. Although it was acquired only a few months ago, the downtown headquarters of the Associated Blind of Greater Boston is already being outgrown, according to Charles W. Little, an officer of the ABGW who is also legislative chairman of the Associated Blind of Massachusetts and a veteran leader in the National Federation.

Charlie tells us that since the Tremont Street office was opened last June, with its duties jointly shared by himself and the late Nathan Nadelman, contacts with the general public and press have been greatly improved. "On October 15, the anniversary date of the White Cane, I did a radio program with Motor Vehicle Registrar James Lawton. We were interviewed by Gus Saunders and Louise Morgan, two radio celebrities. I talked about the origin of the White Cane an implement used by the blind as a safety measure in going about alone," he writes.

Among other projects of the Boston chapter is a fund-raising effort to build or purchase a building adequate for the group's expanding ventures. Also in the wind is a future project involving sponsorship of a blind child in an underprivileged nation.

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Dr. Grant's Work Cited. Dr. Isabelle Grant, famed "ambassador" of the National Federation of the Blind to Pakistan and other newly emerging nations of the East, was the subject of a lengthy article published in the Washington POST on July 14, 1963, and subsequently reprinted in PERFORMANCE: THE STORY OF THE HANDICAPPED, the official monthly publication of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped (December, 1963).

Noting that Dr. Grant was returning to Pakistan for the third time to teach its teachers how to instruct blind children, the article quoted her as follows:

"We Americans are not accustomed to go a long way to understanding other peoples--we usually expect them to understand us instead. . . . All I ask for blind people is that they get the right of self-development, self-direction and self-determination, the opportunity to be educated."

The newspaper article pointed out that Dr. Grant, "who was born in Scotland and still speaks with a slight Scottish accent, came to the United States 30 years ago with her husband, the late Dr. Alexander Lewis Grant. . . . Now an American citizen, she has a doctor's degree in comparative literature from the University of

Southern California and has received teaching certificates from the Sorbonne in Paris and the University of Madrid. She also speaks German and has a reading knowledge of Italian and Portuguese and 'now I'm into Urdu. '"

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Rehab Official Honored. Russell Williams, chief of the Blind Rehabilitation Section of the Veterans Administration, Washington, D. C., was the recipient last summer of an honorary degree of Doctor of Humanities awarded in commencement ceremonies of Western Michigan University. The citation praised Williams for his work in rehabilitation of blind persons and for his personal courage and un-failing spirit. Blinded in 1944, Williams became chief of the VA's blind orientation program in Illinois in 1948, and later moved to Washington where he has been highly successful in promoting and administering the agency's programs for the blind.

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Alabama Federationist Passes. Tom Richardson, of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, passed away on September 14, according to information received from Barney Abbott, our correspondent for the Alabama Federation of the Blind. Richardson was a state board member from Birmingham and a prominent figure for many years at conventions of the National Federation. He will be missed by a great many in the ranks of the organized blind.

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Report on British Blind. "Latest statistics on employment of the blind (in Great Britain) show that there are now some 7,000 blind persons in open, as compared with 4,000 in sheltered occupations," according to Anthony L. de Silva, president of the National Federation of the Blind of the United Kingdom (not connected with the National Federation of the Blind in the United States). Addressing the annual delegate conference of the British Federation, held last June in London, de Silva observed that "everyone will welcome this trend towards open at the expense of sheltered employment. To the Federation, however, it should constitute a direct challenge.

"As the second largest association of the blind in the United Kingdom, it cannot too often be emphasized that we are not, and never have been, a trade union. The appeal of an organization such as our, untrammelled as it is by political or trade union affiliation, should be obvious to all: if it is not, then it is up to each one of us to make it so to this ever-increasing number of blind persons going out into

the world of unsheltered occupations."

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New Policy on Tapes. The National Braille Press, Inc., has announced that its future policy regarding books on tape will be to do all volunteer reading on 1800-foot reels, according to an announcement in THE NEW OUTLOOK. Blind persons desiring such tapes are requested, in submitting a book to be recorded on magnetic tape, to send along also a sufficient number of 1800-foot reels for the book--or alternatively to purchase enough tape for the whole recording at the non-profit rate of \$2.25 per reel.

Another method of obtaining tape-recorded books, through the Library of Congress, is described as follows: "You must send to the Library of Congress a request that the National Braille Press be authorized to record your book on Library of Congress tape. Send the Library the title of the book, author, publisher, and date of copyright. If the book is not eligible to be recorded on Library of Congress tape you will be notified immediately. Otherwise an authorization slip will be sent to you to be forwarded, along with the book, to the National Braille Press, Inc. The taped book will be sent to you with the obligation on your part to return the tapes to the Library of Congress when the book has served your purpose."

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Discrimination Scored. "Discrimination in employment is being practiced today not only against Negroes, but also against Negroes and whites alike because of individual handicaps or disabilities," according to Congressman Thomas B. Curtis. The Missouri Republican, in an October speech in the House of Representatives, condemned the job prejudice as "a great injustice affecting many men and women who, if given the opportunity, would be fully able to perform as well or better than those without handicaps."

Congressman Curtis, whose remarks were printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, quoted from a NEW YORK TIMES editorial which cited the high goals being achieved in vocational rehabilitation and concluded: "The fact that disabled persons can do excellent work is nothing new to organizations dedicated to serving the handicapped. Employers, personnel directors, supervisors, foremen and co-workers should rid themselves of discriminatory practices toward the handicapped. Not merely for compassion's sake, but to help their own businesses."

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Virginia's Braille Library. A wide variety of braille and recorded books of spiritual or inspirational content "geared to readers from third grade through maturity" is available to blind persons from the Braille Circulating Library, Inc., 2823 West Grace Street, Richmond 21, Virginia, according to a communication received from Miss Louise Harrison McCraw, Library Secretary. Among recent titles acquired by the group are six braille books, eight talking books and 16 tape books, generally on religious subjects.

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Japan Blind Described. A brief account of the status of blind persons in Japan, and of the work presently being done for them, was set forth in a recent NEWSLETTER (No. 14) of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind. Noting that "there are in Japan today five rehabilitation centers for the adult blind, 29 rehabilitation institutes for blind children and 75 schools for the blind," the publication pointed out that work for the blind in the Far East nation "is coordinated by a central body formed in 1952 by the joining of all existing associations for the blind into the Japan Council of Welfare Institutions for the Blind."

The Japanese blind were said to be "employed primarily in their traditional professions of massage, acupuncture, moxibustion and music. There are also blind teachers, and some blind persons are employed in industry and in artisan trades such as basketry, knitting, radio assembly, pottery, brush and broom-making, sandal making, etc. The granting of special pensions to the blind is governed by the Welfare Law for the Handicapped of 1950."

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Rehab Scores New Gains. For the second year in a row, more than 100,000 rehabilitations have been tallied under the State-Federal system of rehabilitating disabled men and women to productive and satisfying lives.

According to reports submitted by all the state and territorial rehabilitation agencies to the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration, the actual number of persons rehabilitated reached 110,136. This was the eighth consecutive year in which a new all-time high in rehabilitations had been achieved.

It was pointed out that these increases have resulted from a four-pronged attack on the problems of disability and dependency:
(1) use of increased State and Federal funds for rehabilitation services,
(2) training and recruitment of more professional rehabilitation workers,

(3) establishment of increasing numbers of rehabilitation and workshop facilities, and (4) application of new knowledge and techniques that have come from research in all parts of the country.
